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Study of the adequacy of the study skills at the seventh and eight grade levels of a Basal Series

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A STUDY OF THE ADEQUACY
OF THE STUDY SKILLS AT THE
SEVENTH AND EIGHT GRADE LEVELS OF A BASAL SERIES

by

Raymonde Pelland

A RESEARCH PAPER
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"What's wrong with my average and slightly below average student? They just aren't learning. As a matter of fact they aren't even trying to learn! I present the material according to my course of study and according to the textbook; I plan my presentations well; yet my slower students don't show an interest. They seldom do assignments. Are these students lazy? Am I approaching the task the wrong way?"

These words express the thoughts of many conscientious teachers who want to improve their teaching and help the students in junior and senior high school who are considered as having at least average ability but are not achieving. Many students seem to have mastered the developmental skills in reading but are not applying these skills successfully in the learning of content.¹ While teachers in the past have too often assumed that students were acquainted with skills, schools are well aware that students are weakest in the study skills aspect of reading and are trying to do something about it.

Elementary schools are making a conscious effort in developing study skills as a part of a total reading program; but the effect has not yet been felt at the junior high level. There is little certainty about where to begin and where to go, developmentally speaking. Until

¹Maurice William, and Sylvia Black, "Assignments: Key to Achievement," Journal of Reading, XII, (Nov. 1968), p. 129.

the effects of the solutions now under way are more evident, the junior high school teacher should take it upon herself to strengthen and extend her student's mastery of the study skills.¹

Whenever a basal reader program is used in a school, it is essential to recognize its strengths and weaknesses so that teachers may capitalize on the strengths and substitute for the weaknesses. In planning a reading program at the seventh and eighth grade levels, the teacher has still to analyze the process of learning to read and make sure that the reading program provides for the development of reading skills needed for successful achievement in the total curriculum. To develop proficiency and success, children need guidance and practice in defining and selecting skills which will achieve their purpose. What then are the skills needed for success in the content subjects? Does the basal reader series used in the school provide for sound teaching and practice of the study skills?

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this paper is to study the adequacy of the study skills introduced and reinforced at the seventh and eighth grade levels in the 1968 edition of the Scott Foresman Basal Reader Series as measured by a composite of study skills derived from a survey of literature. The seventh and eighth grade teacher's manuals and workbooks were examined in drawing up a list of study skills.

¹Robert Karlin, "Teaching Reading in High School," (Indianapolis, New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co. Inc., 1964), p. 139.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study are to answer the following questions:

1. What are the study skills needed for successful seventh and eighth grade achievement in the total curriculum?
2. What are the study skills introduced or reinforced in the seventh and eighth grade program of the Scott Foresman Basal Reader Series?
3. To what extent are these skills practiced throughout the program?
4. How does the list of skills in the Scott Foresman program compare with the list drawn from the survey of literature?
5. Which areas of the study skills should a teacher using the Scott Foresman Basal Reader Series supplement or strengthen?

Limitations of the Study

This study was restricted to the 1968 edition of the Scott Foresman Basal Series at the seventh and eighth grade levels. Only the reading skills categorized as "study skills" were considered.

Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the content of this study will help the reader to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of basal reader series and supplement whatever may be lacking with other meaningful materials.

CHAPTER II

SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE

In the modern elementary curriculum, the child reads more widely than ever before and his functional needs, interests, and assignments compel him to read in the specialized "content fields." The term "content field" usually refers to the reading of books devoted to special fields such as geography, history, home economics, science, etc.

"The layman seldom uses the term or ever thinks of its implications. Nevertheless, when he reads an item in the newspaper, a recipe in a cookbook, or information on a traffic citation he is reading content pertaining to the field of current history, home economics, and civics. During the course of an ordinary day, the average adult may be called upon to read restaurant menus, insurance policies, professional magazines, etc. and if he is a skilled reader, he will gear his reading to suit the varying purposes and materials, in somewhat the same way that he drives a car at different rates depending upon the nature of the errand and the types of traffic encountered."¹

Reading proficiency could be improved immeasurably if pupils in the elementary grades might become as familiar with reading techniques needed in reading different types of subject matter at their respective levels as they are with techniques necessary in reading narrative materials.

Terms like word recognition and comprehension have been used for years; but study skills is a comparatively new term and fairly new

¹Lillian Gray, Teaching Children to Read, (New York, New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1963), p. 329.

concept. Some people define study skills broadly as habits, attitudes, and states of mind that are conducive to study, for example, working in a quiet place, budgeting time, attacking an assignment efficiently, and concentrating during study. While these habits and attitudes are conducive to the best use of reading skills, it does not seem appropriate to consider them as reading study skills. The writer finds it helpful to think of reading study skills as defined by Smith, as those skills that form an integral part of the reading process, but that are used especially when application of the content is desired. Thus conceived, study skills in reading may be broadly defined as skills used when there is intention to do something with the content read.¹

"In reading in the content field, we assume the reader has a work-purpose. A distinction is often drawn between "learning to read" and "reading to learn." The former is usually thought of as helping the child apply his reading ability in order to gain knowledge. What is too often overlooked, however, is that children should be taught how to read in the content subjects. In addition to developing an understanding of the technical vocabulary and concepts involved, there are certain reading skills needed for successful use of the content subject material."²

Reading in the basic reader constitutes an easier task than reading in the content fields. Various important factors are controlled in the basic reader which cannot be controlled in books dealing with subject matter content. 1) Vocabulary is more difficult and new terms are introduced faster with fewer repetitions. 2) More facts are presented, greater retention is expected. 3) References to previous facts occur

¹Nila B. Smith, Reading Instruction for Today's Children, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 306.

²Mary Austin, The First R: The Harvar Report on Reading in Elementary School, (New York: MacMillan Co., 1963), p. 47.

more frequently in historical, geographical and other such materials. For almost thirty years, it has been recognized that reading in the content field imposes demands not met by the training in the basal reading program. Yet, special training in the reading skills needed for content reading is not yet universal in our schools at any level.¹

Training in the study skills of reading should be an essential element of the elementary and secondary reading programs. If taught thoroughly, these skills will prepare the pupil for applied reading in content, work type, or study materials. Thus the immediate goal of training in study skills is to prepare the pupil to deal effectively with reading demands other than those commonly encountered in the basal reader program. According to various surveys of the reading difficulties of secondary pupils, a great many of these problems arise from inadequate training in study skills. For example, of the fifty reading difficulties in the content field identified by McCallister, almost half were due to inappropriate methods and techniques used by the pupils.²

Are there really special skills in addition to the common reading skills? Does research confirm the assumption that different skills are used in different subject fields in addition to this common core of skills? Fay conducted a study for the purpose of finding relationships

¹Gray, Teaching Children to Read, p. 330.

²James M. McCallister, "Reading Difficulties in Studying Content Subjects," Elementary School Journal, XXXI (November 1930), pp. 191-201.

between achievement in five specific reading skills in three subjects: arithmetic, social studies, and science. He concluded that ". . . reading skills related to subject matter achievement differ from one achievement area to another."¹ Shores attempted to determine the relationship between certain study and reading skills and reading comprehension of scientific and historical materials. He found that ". . . general reading ability does not apply . . . student must be equipped with specific skills."² Artley investigated the relationship between general comprehension and comprehension in the social studies area. He discovered that ". . . there is much overlapping in ability to read in different subject areas, but there are also many striking differences."³ McMahon gave reading tests in four different fields: arithmetic, literature, social studies, and science. The results showed that ". . . merely because a child reads efficiently one type of subject matter is not assurance that he will read efficiently other types of subject matter."⁴ Robinson and Hall tested rate and comprehension in art, geology, fiction,

¹Leo C. Fay, "The Relationship Between Specific Reading Skills and Selected Areas of Sixth Grade Achievement," Journal of Educational Research, XLIII (March 1950), pp. 541-547.

²Harlam J. Shores, "Skills Related to the Ability to Read History and Science," Journal of Educational Research, XXXVI, (April 1943), pp. 584-593.

³Sterl A. Artley, "General and Specific Factors in Reading Comprehension," Journal of Experimental Education, XLV, (March 1948), pp. 181-188.

⁴Ottis McMahon, "A Study of the Ability of Fifth Grades Pupils to Read Various Types of Material," Peabody Journal of Education, XX, (January 1943), pp. 228-233.

and history and found ". . . reading in different fields is not highly related even though the selections are prepared under one editorship and tested by similar techniques."¹ Stone studied eye movement in reading psychology, physical science, and social science. He concluded, ". . . the reading of different types of material makes varied demands on the reader and is accompanied by different patterns of mental activity."² Sochor gave tests in social studies, science, and arithmetic. In reporting his findings, he stressed ". . . the need for teachers to supplement general reading skills systematically in the subject matter areas."³ Traxler summarized research in regard to reading in the content fields. He states, ". . . it seems clear that in addition to training in general reading skills, there is a definite need for instruction in the reading skills peculiar to each field."⁴ The result of these studies seem to indicate rather clearly that there are unique differences in skills used in different subject matter fields; and that while "general reading ability" is operative in all reading to a certain extent, there is also definite need for the development of specific skills to use in different curricular areas.

¹Francis P. Robinson, and Prudence E. Hall, "Studies of Higher Level Reading Abilities," Journal of Educational Psychology, XXXII, (April 1941), pp. 241-252.

²Lewis Gordon Stone, "Reading Reactions for Different Types of Subject Matter," Journal of Experimental Education, X, (September 1941), pp. 64-77.

³Elona Sochor, "Special Skills Are Needed in Social Studies, Science, and Arithmetic," The Reading Teacher, VI, (March 1953), pp. 4-11.

⁴Arthur Traxler, and Agatha Townsend, "Another Five Years of Research in Reading," Bulletin # 16, (New York: Educational Records Bureau, 1946), p. 21.

Writers have sought to identify those general reading abilities that are needed in all content area reading. Authors differ, however, in their classification of study skills to be taught. The general types of skills are described by Stone who calls them: 1) identifying, which includes skimming, recognizing main ideas, formulating idea families, and understanding the author's organizational scheme, 2) collecting, and 3) locating information.¹ Spache lists seven general types of reading in the content field: 1) understanding and interpreting content, 2) grasping organization of content, 3) developing special vocabularies, concepts, and symbols, 4) evaluating critically what is read, 5) recalling and applying what is read, 6) collecting and collating materials, and 7) broadening interests, tastes, and experiences.² Dechant groups reading study skills as: 1) dictionary skills, 2) locational skills, 3) special skills, and 4) organizational skills.³ Skills are grouped by Massey as: 1) locational, 2) interpretational, literal, and inferential, and 3) special skills.⁴ Smith lists three categories of skills needed to study effectively in content subjects: 1) common reading skills, 2) common study skills, 3) specialized factors, including

¹David Stone, "Teaching Three Functions of Study Reading," Journal of Developmental Reading, III, (Winter 1960), pp. 137-141.

²George Spache, Toward Better Reading, Champaign, Illinois: Garrard Publishing Co., 1963), pp. 283-286.

³Emerald Dechant, Improving the Teaching of Reading, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1964), pp. 217-218.

⁴Will J. Massey, and Virginia Moore, Helping High School Students to Read Better, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), pp. 23-29.

vocabulary and skills peculiar to certain subjects.¹ Harris states that study type reading may be divided into two main kinds. The first is assimilative reading in which the purpose is to absorb and remember the content of a reference work such as a textbook. The second is research reading in which one starts with a problem, locates sources of information, selects what is relevant to the problem, analyzes one's findings into an oral or written report.²

Although this paper deals specifically with study skills, it was judged necessary to include comprehension skills because the application of comprehension abilities to the reading of specific content materials depends on a satisfactory level of attainment in general and specific comprehension abilities. The pupil must be able to exercise discrimination on deciding what specific comprehension abilities are appropriate to apply in a given reading situation.

In determining headings for the tables and lists in this paper, four general classifications were used: 1) locational, 2) organizational, 3) interpretational, and 4) special skills. The above terms were defined in various ways by different authors: for example, adjusting rate of reading was listed by some as an interpretational skill and by others as an organizational skill while still others considered rate of reading as a separate skill. The writer, therefore, adopted the following in drawing up a list of skills from the literature. Locational skills are the skills needed in knowing where to look for information

¹Smith, Reading Instruction for Today's Children, p. 1312.

²Albert J. Harris, "Research on Some Aspects of Comprehension: Rate Flexibility, and Study Skills," Journal of Reading, XII, (Dec. 1968), pp. 205-210.

and how to find it; such as using the library, references index, etc.¹

Organizational skills refer to those skills needed to discriminate and sense the organization of materials and to adjust reading rate accordingly.² Interpretational skills are described by Spache as:

" . . . skills used in grasping the literal meaning and recognizing the broader, inherent meanings. In obtaining literal meaning, the reader is asking, "What does it say?" In recognizing inherent meanings, he is, in effect, reading between the lines for intent and tone, for unexpressed generalizations or inferences, or to interpret rhetorical devices and figurative language. Levels of understanding may also be distinguished as: 1) recognizing what the author has said and selecting certain facts to answer specific questions. 2) dealing reflectively with inferences or implications."³

The Special skills are the "diagrammatic materials," that is, interpreting maps, charts, tables, etc. Strang states that just as the student must learn vocabulary of a foreign language. . .

" . . .so he has to learn the symbolic language of maps. Just as his impression of descriptive passages gains in vividness when he pictures the scenes described, so his reading of maps becomes more realistic as he visualizes the rivers, glaciers, and other features of the landscape indicated by maps. He needs to be taught to recognize that a map is a ground plan drawn to scale; to read a descriptive story from maps; to read different kinds of maps; to progress from simple to more complex maps; and so read maps in order to learn."⁴

¹Massey, Helping High School Students to Read Better, pp. 23.

²Guy L. Bond, and Miles A. Tinker, Reading Difficulties; Their Diagnosis and Correction, (New York: Meredith Publishing Co., 1967), p. 141.

³Spache, Toward Better Reading, p. 283.

⁴Ruth Strang, and Constance McCullough, and Arthur E. Traxler, Problems in the Improvement of Reading, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1955), p. 194.

The authors studied agree to some extent on the skills necessary to succeed at the junior high level. Those who list skills in each area of the curriculum list fewer skills in the field of literature than in other areas. They generally agree that the ability to read literary material depends upon proficiency in the basic reading skills presented earlier.

Harris seems to give less emphasis to the interpretational skills and generally reduces the number of skills as shown in list 1.

LIST 1

SKILLS LISTED BY HARRIS¹

Listed for all content area subjects as a group

1. Locational skills
 - using library and references
 - locating information
 - using table of content and index
 - using unit and chapter headings
 - using reader's guide
2. Organizational skills
 - selecting main ideas
 - selecting supporting details
 - recognizing sequence of events and ideas
 - summarizing
 - outlining
 - understanding organizational scheme
3. Interpretational skills
 - comparing and contrasting
4. Special skills
 - interpreting pictures
 - interpreting graphs
 - interpreting charts
 - interpreting maps
 - interpreting tables

¹Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability (New York: David McKay Co., 1961), pp. 447-451.

List 2 shows that Massey and Moore give considerably more attention to locational and interpretational skills but are similar to Harris in special skills.

LIST 2

SKILLS LISTED BY MASSEY AND MOORE¹

1. Locational skills
 - using various guides and sources
 - using library and references
 - locating information
 - using table of content and index
 - using unit and chapter headings
 - using dictionaries and glossaries
 - using reader's guide
 - using card index file
 - using cross-reference
 - using appendixes
 - using footnotes
2. Organizational skills
 - selecting main ideas
 - selecting supporting details
 - selecting sequence of events and ideas
 - classifying ideas
 - understanding organizational scheme
 - adjusting rate of reading
 - skimming
 - careful reading
3. Interpretational skills
 - developing special vocabularies
 - following directions
 - comparing and contrasting
 - predicting outcomes
 - drawing inferences
 - detecting mood and purpose
 - noting relationships
 - evaluating material
 - appreciating what is read
4. Special skills
 - interpreting pictures
 - interpreting graphs
 - interpreting charts
 - interpreting maps
 - interpreting tables
 - interpreting footnotes

¹Massey and Moore, Helping High School Students to Read Better, pp. 23-29.

As shown in list 3, McCallister is similar to Massey and Moore in organizational, interpretational, and special skills but gives little emphasis to locational skills.

LIST 3

SKILLS LISTED BY McCALLISTER¹

1. Locational skills
 - using various guides and sources
 - locating information
2. Organizational skills
 - selective reading
 - selecting main ideas
 - selecting supporting details
 - recognizing sequence of events and ideas
 - classifying ideas
 - summarizing
 - outlining
 - adjusting rate of reading
 - skimming
 - careful reading
3. Interpretational skills
 - comparing and contrasting
 - predicting outcomes
 - drawing inferences
 - drawing conclusions
 - detecting mood and purpose
 - generalizing
 - evaluating material
 - interpreting what is read
 - recognizing propaganda
 - appreciating what is read
 - applying what is read
4. Special skills
 - interpreting pictures
 - interpreting graphs
 - interpreting charts
 - interpreting maps
 - interpreting tables
 - interpreting footnotes

¹James B. McCallister, "Reading Study Skills," Evaluation of Reading (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 107.

Stone stresses organizational skills while locational and interpretational skills are scant.

LIST 4

SKILLS LISTED BY STONE¹

1. Locational skills
 - using library and references
 - using dictionaries and glossaries
2. Organizational skills
 - selective reading
 - selecting main ideas
 - organizing material from various sources
 - taking notes
 - summarizing
 - outlining
 - paraphrasing
 - remembering what is read
 - understanding organizational scheme
 - skimming
3. Interpretational skills
 - applying what is read
4. Special skills
 - interpreting maps
 - interpreting graphs
 - interpreting charts
 - interpreting tables

Smith is quite similar to Stone in locational, organizational, and special skills but gives more emphasis to interpretational skills.

¹David R. Stone, "Teaching Three Functions of Study Reading," Journal of Developmental Reading, 111, (Winter 1960), pp. 137-141.

LIST 5

SKILLS LISTED BY SMITH¹Listed for all content areas

1. Locational skills
 - using various guides and sources
 - using library and references
 - locating information
2. Organizational skills
 - selecting main ideas
 - selecting supporting details
 - recognizing sequence of events and ideas
 - classifying ideas
 - organizing materials from various sources
 - summarizing
 - outlining
 - remembering what is read
3. Interpretational skills
 - defining reading purpose
 - noting relationships
 - following directions
 - developing special vocabularies
4. Special skills
 - interpreting pictures
 - interpreting graphs
 - interpreting charts
 - interpreting maps
 - interpreting tables

List 6 shows Bamman, Hogan, and Greene's summary of skills as they apply to different areas. The locational skills are meager while more attention is given to organizational, interpretational, and special skills.

¹Smith, Reading Instruction for Today's Children, pp. 312

LIST 6

SKILLS LISTED BY BAMMAN, HOGAN, AND GREENE¹

Skill	Subject			
	Soc. Studies	Sci.	Math.	Lit.
1. Locational skills				
locating information	x			
using library facilities	x			
2. Organizational skills				
identifying main ideas	x	x	x	
identifying details	x	x	x	
recognizing sequence of events	x			
taking notes	x			
summarizing	x			
recognizing organizational scheme	x			
adjusting rate of reading	x	x		
using the problem solving technique		x		
3. Interpretational skills				
understanding terminology	x	x	x	
seeing cause and effect relationship	x			
drawing conclusions	x			
making inferences	x			
generalizing	x			
discriminating fact and opinion	x			
interpreting data	x			
understanding and appreciating different types of literature				x
appreciating style and mood				x
appreciating characters and charac- terization				x
understanding figurative language				x
4. Special skills				
interpreting maps and charts	x	x		
interpreting graphs	x	x		
interpreting tables	x	x		
interpreting figures and symbols		x		
interpreting illustrations		x		
interpreting diagrams		x		

¹Henry Bamman, Ursula Hogan, and Charles E. Greene, Reading Instruction in the Secondary Schools (New York: David McKay Co., 1961), pp. 122-186.

Dawson list is similar to Bamman, Hogan, and Greene's but is less detailed. This may be due to the fact that Dawson restricts his list to elementary grade levels.

LIST 7

SKILLS LISTED BY DAWSON¹

Skill	Subject			
	Soc. Studies	Sci.	Math.	Lit.
1. Locational skills				
locating information	x			
using references	x			
reading related material		x		
2. Organizational skills				
identifying main idea	x			
identifying relevant details	x			
recognizing sequence of events	x			
taking notes	x			
summarizing	x			
using problem solving technique		x		
adjusting rate of reading	x		x	
3. Interpretational skills				
understanding terminology	x	x	x	
seeing cause and effect relationship	x			
defining and analyzing a problem	x			
relating history to current issues	x			
evaluating source of information	x			
discriminating between fact and opinion	x			
4. Special skills				
interpreting maps	x			
interpreting graphs	x			
interpreting tables	x			
interpreting symbols		x		

¹Mildred Dawson, and Henry A. Bamman, Fundamentals of Basic Reading Instruction (New York: David McKay Co., 1963), pp. 241-259.

Gray emphasizes organizational and interpretational skills as needed in social studies, science, and mathematics. No skills are listed for literature.

LIST 8

SKILLS LISTED BY GRAY¹

Skill	Subject		
	Soc. Studies	Sci.	Math.
1. Locational skills			
locating information	x		
2. Organizational skills			
organizing information	x		
identifying main ideas	x		
identifying relevant details	x		
recognizing sequence of events	x		
adjusting rate of reading	x	x	x
using scientific method		x	
3. Interpretational skills			
understanding terminology	x	x	x
seeing relationship	x		
drawing conclusions	x		
generalizing	x		
classifying concepts	x		
interpreting data	x		
evaluating material	x	x	
understanding principles and laws of science		x	
following directions		x	
4. Special skills			
interpreting maps	x		
interpreting graphs	x		
interpreting symbols			x

¹Gray, Teaching Children to Read, pp. 331-358

Simpson stresses skills in four major areas giving considerable importance to interpretational skills. She lists more skills for literature than other authors do.

LIST 9
SKILLS LISTED BY SIMPSON¹

Skill	Subject			
	Soc. Studies	Sci.	Math.	Lit.
1. Locational skill				
locating information	x	x		
using library and references	x	x		
2. Organizational skills				
organizing information	x	x		
recognizing sequence of events	x			
summarizing	x			
outlining	x			
skimming	x			
using problem solving technique		x	x	
adjusting rate of reading	x		x	x
3. Interpretational skills				
understanding terminology	x	x	x	
reading critically	x			x
seeing relationships	x			x
drawing conclusions	x			
making inferences	x			x
generalizing	x	x	x	
detecting propaganda	x			
analyzing material	x			x
interpreting data	x			
evaluating material	x			
applying what is read	x	x	x	
evaluating reliability of source		x		
following directions		x		
understanding figurative language				x
appreciating different types of literature				x
evaluating good literature				x
recognizing purpose of author				x
4. Special skills				
interpreting maps	x			
interpreting graphs	x		x	
interpreting photographs	x			
interpreting charts	x			
interpreting cartoons	x			
interpreting symbols			x	

¹Elizabeth A. Simpson, Helping High School Students Read Better (Chicago, Illinois: Science Research Associate, Inc., 1954), pp. 12-14.

Strang follows Simpson but gives less details in literature. She also emphasizes interpretational skills and lists few locational skills.

LIST 10

SKILLS LISTED BY STRANG¹

Skill	Subject			
	Soc. Studies	Sci.	Math.	Lit.
1. Locational skills				
locating information	x			
using library facilities	x			
using references	x			
2. Organizational skills				
organizing information	x			
identifying main ideas	x			
identifying relevant details	x			
using problem solving techniques		x	x	
adjusting rate of reading	x	x		
3. Interpretational skills				
understanding terminology	x	x		
reading critically	x			
seeing relationships	x			
drawing conclusions	x			
detecting propaganda	x			
analyzing material	x			
applying what is read	x			
evaluating evidence		x		
following directions		x		
careful reading			x	
choosing proper solutions			x	
understanding characterization				x
generalizing			x	
understanding figurative language				x
4. Special skills				
interpreting maps	x			
interpreting graphs	x			
interpreting tables	x			
interpreting charts	x			
interpreting diagrams	x			
interpreting pictures	x			

¹Ruth Strang, and Dorothy K. Bracken, Making Better Readers (Boston, Mass.: D.C. Heath Co., 1957), pp. 221-256.

Smith and Dechant's list is very much like Simpson's with emphasis on interpretational, organizational, and special skills and little stress on locational skills.

LIST 11

SKILLS LISTED BY SMITH AND DECHANT¹

Skill	Subject			
	Soc. Studies	Sci.	Math.	Lit.
1. Locational skills				
locating information	x			x
using library facilities				x
2. Organizational skills				
organizing information	x			x
identifying main ideas	x			
identifying relevant details	x			
using the problem solving technique		x	x	
adjusting rate of reading	x		x	x
3. Interpretational skills				
understanding terminology	x		x	
reading critically	x		x	x
seeing relationships	x			x
drawing conclusions	x			
generalizing	x			
classifying concepts	x			
detecting propaganda	x			
evaluating source of information	x			
analyzing material	x		x	
applying what is read	x	x		
choosing proper solution		x	x	
evaluating evidence		x		
following directions		x		x
appreciating different types of literature				x
4. Special skills				
interpreting maps	x			
interpreting graphs	x		x	
interpreting tables	x			
interpreting charts	x			
interpreting diagrams	x			
interpreting pictures and illustrations	x		x	
interpreting cartoons	x			

¹Henry P. Smith, and Emerald V. Dechant, Psychology in Teaching Reading (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1961), pp. 353-367.

Bond and Tinker¹ present skills needed for all content areas as shown in list 12 then follow with a more detailed list of skills as they apply to different subjects. More emphasis is given to interpretational skills than to locational and organizational skills.

Special skills are not repeated in list 13.

LIST 12

SKILLS LISTED BY BOND AND TINKER

Listed for all content areas

1. Locational skills
 - using various guides and sources
 - using library and references
 - locating information
 - using the reader's guide
2. Organizational skills
 - organizing material from various sources
3. Interpretational
 - evaluating material
 - interpreting material
4. Special skills
 - interpreting pictures
 - interpreting graphs
 - interpreting charts
 - interpreting maps
 - interpreting tables

¹Bond and Tinker, Reading Difficulties: Their Diagnosis and Correction, pp. 401-408.

LIST 13

Skill	Subject			
	Soc. Studies	Sci.	Math.	Lit.
1. Locational skills				
locating information	x	x		x
using library facilities	x	x		x
using references	x			
2. Organizational skills				
organizing information	x	x	x	x
recognizing organizational scheme	x			
adjusting rate of reading	x	x	x	x
3. Interpretational skills				
understanding terminology	x	x	x	
reading critically	x			
seeing relationships	x			
defining and analyzing a problem	x			
classifying concepts	x			
discriminating between fact and opinion	x			
evaluating material	x	x		
drawing conclusions	x	x		
generalizing		x	x	
following directions		x	x	
careful reading			x	
appreciating mood and style				x
analyzing plot and theme				x
recognizing author's purpose				x

As seen in lists 14 and 15, Russell follows the same pattern of presentation as Bond and Tinker but gives a much more detailed list. He seems to give equal stress to locational, organizational, interpretational, and special skills. Skills for literature are not listed.

LIST 14

SKILLS LISTED BY RUSSELL¹Listed for content areas

1. Locational skills
 - using various guides and sources
 - using library and references
 - locating information
 - using table of content and index
 - using chapter and unit heading
 - using dictionaries and glossaries
 - using reader's guide
 - using card index file
2. Organizational skills
 - selective reading
 - selective main ideas
 - selecting supporting details
 - recognizing sequence of events and ideas
 - classifying ideas
 - organizing material from various sources
 - taking notes
 - summarizing
 - outlining
 - remembering what is read
 - adjusting rate of reading
 - skimming
3. Interpretational skills
 - defining reading purpose
 - developing special vocabularies
 - following directions
 - drawing inferences
 - drawing conclusions
 - evaluating material
 - interpreting what is read
 - recognizing facts and opinions
 - judging the validity of information
 - applying what is read
4. Special skills
 - interpreting pictures
 - interpreting graphs
 - interpreting charts
 - interpreting maps
 - interpreting tables

¹David H. Russell, Children Learn to Read (Chicago, Illinois: Ginn and Co., 1949), pp. 326-349.

LIST 15

SKILLS LISTED BY RUSSELL¹

Skill	Subject		
	Soc. Studies	Sci.	Math.
1. Locational skills			
locating information	x	x	
using references	x		
2. Organizational skills			
organizing information	x		
identifying main ideas	x		
identifying relevant details	x		
recognizing sequence of events	x		
taking notes	x		
outlining	x		
using scientific method of problem solving		x	x
adjusting rate of reading	x	x	
3. Interpretational skills			
understanding terminology	x	x	x
seeing relationships	x		
evaluating source of information	x		
discriminating between fact and opinion	x		
understanding principles and laws of science		x	
generalizing		x	
understanding social implications		x	
applying what is read	x	x	
choosing the proper solution			x
4. Special skills			
interpreting maps	x		
interpreting charts	x		

Spache lists skills for all content areas with more emphasis on organizational skills in list 16. He then discusses skills as needed for different subjects, giving more importance to interpretational skills as shown in list 17.

¹Russell, Children Learn to Read, pp. 326-349.

LIST 16

SKILLS LISTED BY SPACHE¹

Skill	Subject			
	Soc. Studies	Sci.	Math.	Lit.
1. Locational skills				
locating information	x			
using library facilities	x			
using references	x			
2. Organizational skills				
organizing information	x		x	
taking notes	x	x		
summarizing	x			
outlining	x			
skimming	x			
steps for solving problems		x	x	
adjusting rate of reading	x	x	x	x ¹
3. Interpretational skills				
understanding terminology	x	x	x	
reading critically	x			x
seeing relationships	x			x
evaluating sources of information	x			
detecting propaganda	x			
analyzing material	x			
discriminating between fact and opinion				
interpreting data	x			
evaluating material	x	x		
following directions		x		
choosing proper solution		x	x	
generalizing			x	
analyzing plot and theme				x
appreciating different kinds of literature				x
4. Special skills				
interpreting maps	x			
interpreting graphs	x	x	x	
interpreting tables	x	x		
interpreting photographs	x			
interpreting charts	x	x		
interpreting cartoons	x			
interpreting symbols			x	

¹Spache, Toward Better Reading, pp. 276-290.

LIST 17

SKILLS LISTED BY SPACHE¹Listed for all content areas

1. Locational skills
 - using various sources and guides
 - using library and references
 - locating information
 - using table of content and index
 - using dictionaries and glossaries
 - using reader's guide
2. Organizational skills
 - selective reading
 - selecting main ideas
 - selecting main ideas
 - selecting supporting details
 - surveying material
 - organizing material from various sources
 - taking notes
 - summarizing
 - outlining
 - paraphrasing
 - remembering what is read
 - adjusting rate of reading
 - understanding organizational scheme
 - skimming
3. Interpretational skills
 - developing special vocabularies
 - defining reading purpose
 - evaluating material
 - interpreting what is read
 - applying what is read
4. Special skills
 - interpreting pictures
 - interpreting maps
 - interpreting charts
 - interpreting graphs
 - interpreting tables

As seen in lists 18 and 19, Dechant follows Spache and Russell in his presentation. Locational skills receive more attention in list 18 while interpretational skills are more detailed in list 19.

¹Spache, Toward Better Reading, pp. 276-290.

LIST 18

SKILLS LISTED BY DECHANT¹Listed for all content areas

1. Locational skills
 - using various guides and sources
 - using library and references
 - locating information
 - using table of content and index
 - using cross-reference
 - using dictionaries and glossaries
 - using card index file
2. Organizational skills
 - selective reading
 - selecting main ideas
 - recognizing sequence of events and ideas
 - taking notes
 - summarizing
 - outlining
 - remembering what is read
3. Interpretational skills
 - defining reading purpose
 - developing special vocabularies
 - following directions
 - detecting mood and purpose
 - noting relationships
 - evaluating material
 - interpreting what is read
 - recognizing fact and opinion
 - applying what is read
4. Special skills
 - interpreting pictures
 - interpreting graphs
 - interpreting charts
 - interpreting maps
 - interpreting tables
 - interpreting footnotes

¹Dechant, Improving the Teaching of Reading, pp. 378-401.

LIST 19

SKILLS LISTED BY DECHANT¹

Skill	Subject			
	Soc. Studies	Sci.	Math.	Lit.
1. Locational skills				
using the library	x			
using bibliographies and references		x		
2. Organizational skills				
organizing information		x	x	
selecting main ideas		x		
selecting relevant details		x		
recognizing sequence of steps		x	x	
outlining	x	x		
summarizing		x		
careful reading	x	x	x	
adjusting rate of reading	x	x	x	
3. Interpretational skills				
understanding terminology	x		x	
reading critically	x			
seeing cause and effect relationship	x			
detecting propaganda	x			
applying what is read	x			
identifying a problem		x		
collating evidence		x		
drawing conclusions		x		
evaluating evidence		x		
following directions		x		
appreciating mood and style				x
analyzing plot and theme				x
understanding characterization				x
evaluating good literature				x
evaluating what is read				x
recognizing author's purpose				x
4. Special skills				
interpreting maps	x			
interpreting graphs	x			
interpreting tables	x			
interpreting graphs			x	
interpreting figures			x	
interpreting illustrations	x		x	

¹Dechant, Improving the Teaching of Reading, pp. 378-401.

Reorganization of Study Skills in Foregoing Lists

In Table 1, the various skills named by reading specialists and previously listed are summarized to provide a composite picture which shows the number of experts who named each skill.

TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF STUDY SKILLS FROM FOREGOING LISTS

Skill	SOURCE													
	Strang	Simpson	Gray	Dawson	Bauman	Bond	Harris	Massey	McCallister	Russell	Smith	Speche	Stone	Dechant
1. Locational skills														
Using library and reference	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Locating information	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
Using table of content and index							x	x		x		x		x
Using unit and chapter headings							x	x		x		x		
Using reader's guide						x		x	x	x		x		
Using dictionaries and glossaries								x		x		x	x	x
Using various guides and sources						x		x	x	x	x	x		x
Using index card file								x		x				x
Using cross-reference								x						x
Using appendixes								x						
Using footnotes								x						x
Reading related material				x										
Using bibliographies														x
2. Organizational skills														
Organizing material from various sources	x	x	x			x				x	x	x	x	x
Selecting main ideas	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Selecting supporting details	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x

TABLE 1--Continued

Skill	SOURCE													
	Strang	Simpson	Gray	Dawson	Banman	Bond	Harris	Massey	McCallister	Russell	Smith	Spache	Stone	Dechant
2. Organizational skills														
Recognizing sequence of events and ideas		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x			x
Summarizing		x		x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Outlining		x					x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Understanding organizational scheme					x	x	x	x				x	x	
Classifying ideas								x	x	x	x			
Adjusting rate of reading	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x
Skimming		x						x	x	x		x	x	
Careful reading		x				x			x	x				
Selective reading									x	x		x	x	x
Taking notes				x	x					x		x	x	x
Paraphrasing												x	x	
Remembering what is read										x	x	x	x	x
Using problem solving technique	x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x		x
Surveying material												x		
3. Interpretational skills														
Defining reading purpose										x	x	x		x
Comparing and contrasting							x	x	x	x	x	x		
Understanding terminology	x	x	x	x	x	x		x		x		x		x
Following directions	x	x	x			x		x		x	x	x		x
Predicting outcomes								x	x					

TABLE 1--Continued

Skill	SOURCE													
	Strang	Simpson	Gray	Dawson	Benman	Bond	Harris	Massey	McCallister	Russell	Smith	Spache	Stone	Dechant
3. Interpretational skills														
Drawing inferences		x			x			x	x	x				
Detecting mood and purpose						x		x	x					x
Noting relationships	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x
Evaluating material	x	x	x			x		x	x	x		x		x
Appreciating what is read								x	x					
Drawing conclusions	x	x	x		x	x			x	x				x
Generalizing	x	x	x		x	x			x	x		x		x
Interpreting what is read		x	x		x	x			x	x		x		
Recognizing propaganda	x	x							x			x		x
Applying what is read	x	x							x	x		x	x	x
Discriminating fact and opinion				x	x	x				x		x		x
Understanding different types of literature		x			x							x		x
Appreciating plot and theme												x		x
Appreciating style and mood					x	x								x
Appreciating character and characterization	x				x									x
Understanding figurative language	x	x			x									
Defining and analyzing a problem				x		x								
Choosing proper solution	x									x		x		x
Relating history to current events				x										

TABLE 1--Continued

Skill	SOURCE													
	Strang	Simpson	Gray	Dawson	Benman	Bond	Harris	Massey	McCallister	Russell	Smith	Spache	Stone	Dechant
3. Interpretational skills														
Evaluating source of information		x		x						x		x		x
Classifying concepts			x			x								x
Understanding principles and laws of science			x							x				
Analyzing material	x	x												x
Reading critically	x	x				x						x		x
Recognizing author's purpose		x				x								x
4. Special skills														
Interpreting pictures	x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x
Interpreting graphs	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Interpreting charts	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Interpreting maps	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Interpreting tables	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Interpreting footnotes								x	x			x		x
Interpreting figures and symbols		x	x	x	x									x
Interpreting diagrams	x				x									x
Interpreting photographs		x												
Interpreting cartoons		x										x		x

CHAPTER III

SKILLS IN THE SCOTT FORESMAN BASAL READER SERIES

In drawing up the list of skills taught in the seventh and eighth grade of the Scott Foresman Basal Reader program, the guidebooks and workbooks were studied. The writer also examined the fifth and sixth grade guidebooks and workbooks to determine which skills were being introduced and which were reinforced. In the introduction of the seventh and eighth grade Guidebooks,¹ it is stated that. . .

"Students using The New Basic Readers have acquired fundamental understandings about the spoken and written language. They have been gradually mastering many skills and abilities that characterize a competent reader. These include the ability to comprehend literal and implied meanings, to grasp main ideas, and to organize and summarize details that support main ideas. Pupils also have been increasing their competence in recognizing author's techniques, in responding to sensory images, in evaluating actions and personal traits of characters, in perceiving various kinds of relationships, in identifying an author's attitude and purpose, and in noting elements of style. At every level, students have been encouraged to recognize well constructed plots, convincing characterizations, and universal themes. They have also become acquainted with the characteristics of a number of literary forms.

From the beginning of reading instruction, pupils have been required to search for meaning in what they read and have been urged to approach all reading matter with intellectual curiosity and an open mind. They have been guided in setting purposes for reading and in developing standards for determining the intrinsic value of material. They have begun to form habits of previewing, skimming, and rereading.

In addition to receiving sequential and continuous instruction in the development of reading skills, pupils have been introduced to

¹Helen M. Robinson, and others, Guidebook: Dimensions, (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1967), p. 7.

a variety of reading materials and have been encouraged to do wide personal reading on many different subjects."

The program at these levels is designed to help students refine and extend the reading skills they have been acquiring gradually and to place more and more responsibility for mastery of skills upon the individual student.

In Table 2, skills introduced and/or reinforced at the seventh and eighth grade levels are summarized to provide a picture which shows the number of reinforcements given to each one.

TABLE 2

SKILLS LISTED IN SCOTT FORESMAN BASAL READER SERIES

Skills	INTRODUCTION		REINFORCEMENT	
	7	8	7	8
1. Locational skills				
Using card catalogue			2	2
Using dictionary and glossary			12	11
Using footnotes	x		2	2
Using reference aids			13	3
Locating information				4
Using reader's guide			2	4
Using table of contents			1	1
Research				12
2. Organizational skills				
Adjusting rate of reading			10	13
Selecting main ideas			23	26
Selecting details			10	5
Taking notes			1	1
Organizing material			12	8
Summarizing			12	8
Outlining	x		3	2
Previewing			7	10
Skimming			4	4
Understanding organizational scheme			4	4
Recognizing sequence of events			6	3
3. Interpretational skills				
Comparing and contrasting			18	11
Following directions	x		2	
Drawing inferences			5	7
Detecting mood and purpose			6	6
Noting relationships			23	27
Drawing conclusions			13	13
Generalizing			13	2
Discriminating facts and opinions			2	2
Understanding different types of literature			23	24
Appreciating style			46	36
Appreciating plot and theme			3	11
Appreciating characters and characterization			26	18
Understanding figurative language			8	6

TABLE 2--Continued

Skills	INTRODUCTION		REINFORCEMENT	
	7	8	7	8
3. Interpretational skills				
Evaluating source of information			3	4
Reading critically			14	15
Recognizing author's purpose			10	6
4. Special skills				
Interpreting charts			8	3
Interpreting diagrams			6	2
Interpreting illustrations			9	10
Interpreting maps			3	4
Interpreting cartoons		x		2
Interpreting photographs				4
Interpreting graphs				4

After comparing Tables 1 and 2, the list of skills shown in Table 3 was drawn up to show which skills do not appear in the Scott Foresman program and the number of authors who listed each one.

TABLE 3

SKILLS NOT LISTED IN SCOTT FORESMAN READERS

Skill	Number of Authors
1. Locational skills	
Using index	5
Using unit and chapter heading	3
Using cross-reference	2
Using appendixes	1
Using bibliographies	1
2. Organizational skills	
Paraphrasing	2
Remembering what is read	5
Using problem solving technique	9
Surveying material	1
3. Interpretational skills	
Predicting outcomes	2
Evaluating material	9
Interpreting what is read	7
Recognizing propaganda	5
Applying what is read	7
Defining and analyzing a problem	2
Choosing proper solution	4
Relating history to current events	1
Understanding principles and laws of science	2
Analyzing material	3
4. Special skills	
Interpreting tables	12
Interpreting figures and symbols	5

Observations and Implications

Upon examination of Tables 1, 2, and 3 the following observations were made:

1. The Scott, Foresman program does incorporate most of the skills listed by the experts studied.

2. Under the heading "Locational Skills," the first two skills listed; Using library and Reference, and Locating information are listed by 13 and 12 authors respectively. The remaining eleven skills are incorporated under these two major skills.
3. In the Scott Foresman program, it was found that "Using Reference Aids, Locating Information, and Research are essentially the same and may be summarized as "Using Library and References." The Research section, however, merely directs or encourages interested students to report on certain topics. It provides opportunities to practice library skills.
4. Using footnotes, outlining, and following directions are the only skills introduced at the seventh grade level. At the eighth grade level, interpreting cartoons is the only new skill introduced.
5. Little reinforcement is given to note taking, outlining, skimming, following directions, discriminating facts and opinions, and evaluating material.
6. Skills receiving the most reinforcement are literary skills.
7. Because skimming and careful reading coincide with the idea of Selective reading, it was judged unnecessary to list "Selective Reading" in Table 3.
8. Defining a reading purpose was not listed as such in the Scott Foresman program. However, a purpose is set before reading each story and the lessons on adjusting rate of reading give the student practice in reading for different purposes.
9. Interpreting what is read is not listed as a skill in the Scott Foresman program but is practiced with each story in the program.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In her book, "Learning to Read: The Great Debate," Chall¹ reports that basal authors interviewed saw their series as only part of the total program. On author says:

"I don't see it as a total reading program. It is part of one. In fact, I believe it is too much a part of the total program in some schools. Our manuals suggest that there is a lot of reading to be done in content fields and in library books. In practically every lesson in the manuals, we recommend supplementary, related reading-references to children's books."

As any teacher knows, a reader designed for junior high does not contain all of the suitable materials nor all the necessary related practice for a heterogeneous class. The wise teacher will correlate the teaching of reading skills with reading in the content subjects.

The main purpose of the basal series is to teach the basic skills. Some of the special reading skills required for arithmetic, social studies, and science are taught in the basal program but receive little practice. These are left to the textbooks in those areas. Unless practice is provided, pupils cannot handle the more difficult material and increasingly complex ideas with which they are expected to deal.

The very weight and complexity of content make imperative the need for improved reading skills. The time to begin teaching study

¹Jeanne Chall, Learning to Read: The Great Debate, (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1967), p. 191.

type reading skills is when the pupils are first introduced to textbook materials at the intermediate level. Different patterns of content call for different approaches and skills. The teacher must help the student to identify these patterns and to develop the skills necessary to deal with each one. This can be better accomplished by using the textbook. These techniques must be taught in the period set aside for every subject. No matter how excellent the instruction in basic reading, children need additional definite guidance in handling curriculum reading. It is no longer possible to hold that reading skills will transfer from one field to another. Reading is not a generalized ability that pupils learn once and for all time. Rather, reading is a composite of many skills, each varying with the situation.

Bond and Tinker¹ tell us that ". . . to develop proficient reading in the social studies, science, mathematics, and literature, the teacher must know the reading problems and difficulties in each field with which she is concerned." Equipped with this information, every teacher will be better able to teach her pupils how to read material in the content field. Each teacher in the content subjects must assume responsibility for introducing and practicing reading skills that are especially needed for the subject she teaches as well as helping the student know how to study her subject most effectively and how to use reference materials particularly valuable to it. In a supervised study period, the student learns effective methods of reading and ways to overcome difficulties they encounter.

¹Bond and Tinker, Reading Difficulties: Their Diagnosis and Correction, p. 401

Many young people who are excellent readers of library materials still fail in school because they have not learned to concentrate and think while reading informational materials or because they lack effective study habits. Good study habits depend not only upon a knowledge of sound procedures in attacking factual materials but also upon the ability to decide just what skills or habits are applicable to the situation or the particular assignment.

Many conscientious student when confronted with a reading task become anxious and read more than is actually required. The result is a waste of time and in many cases a confusion of ideas. The student should be guided in doing selective reading that is meaningful. Especially in the reading of reference material, selective reading is of utmost value. The reader must keep clearly in mind the information sought and systematically discard any material that is irrelevant or unimportant.

Flemming¹ asks:

"Is it possible that too long and too exclusive an emphasis on "careful, expressive" reading to the neglect of some exercises in skimming where every word, punctuation mark and nuance is not essential-has placed too many children in the position where, if they are not constitutionally unable, they are in the least reluctant to "go through quickly, just to get the gist of it," fearful of missing something? If this criticism reflects on going classroom procedure, such procedure is indefensible, for to be unable or unwilling to adjust one's reading is to be unknowing, to be exercising no discrimination, to be, in short, an ineffective reader."

The gamut of study skills represent a formidable load for any single content teacher. It would seem advisable to find some manner of allocating responsibility for their practice to particular areas of the instructional program. Certain area teachers could concentrate on the

¹James T. Flemming, "Skimming: Neglected in Research," Journal of Reading, XII (Dec., 1968), pp. 211-214.

reading and study skills more relevant to their own content work. Despite many exhortations, content teachers are still declining to accept responsibility for the training in reading skills needed in their areas. They feel, with some justification, that they have not been trained in reading methods and can barely find time to teach their own content area thoroughly, much less include other topics for which they are poorly prepared.

In a study examining the nature of the programs in the colleges and universities of the United States where future teachers are enrolled, with particular emphasis on instruction in reading offered to undergraduates, it was found that the content of the majority of college courses in reading instruction is geared to the theory and practice of the teaching of reading at the primary grade-level. Except in three colleges which offer separate courses in primary and intermediate grade reading, the intermediate grade reading program typically is being given only minimal attention. Many instructors expressed concern at not being able to deal more effectively with those higher reading skills which make the real difference between the mechanical and the mature reader. Instructors complained that student teachers themselves are notably weak in critical reading ability having come up through school programs which neglected the higher reading skills.¹

Teacher training should be improved so that every teacher is familiar with a host of reading methods applicable to the different areas of the curriculum. Every teacher should be able to adapt these methods to the specific needs of her pupils.

¹Mary C. Austin, The Torch Lighters: Tomorrow's Teachers of Reading (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1961), p. 45.

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